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The relationship between transformational leadership and employees' satisfaction at Jordanian private hospitals

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The present study has aimed at identifying the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals, the population of the study consisted of registered nurses at private hospitals located in Amman (capital of Jordan). There have been 200 surveys mailed out to registered nurses. One hundred and sixty eight usable surveys have been returned with an 83% response rate. Regarding transformational leadership, the survey was adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss (1967) was adapted to measure the two factors of job satisfaction.

The present study has shown a statistically significant positive relationship existing between the five dimensions of transformational leadership and the two dimensions of job satisfaction, the strongest relationship between internal job satisfaction and transformational leadership has been visible among the intellectual stimulation dimension.

JEL Classifications: M10

Keywords: Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, registered nurses, Jordan.

Introduction

At this era of market globalization and the abundance of information in terms of speed, size and rapid changes in the business domain as well as an increase in competition, there has been an increasing need for flexibility and capability of response. This involved changing in the method and ways of response adopted by organizations (Katzenbach, 1998). All such requires a careful leadership with clear vision which believes that success, excellence and creativity requires constant adaptation with external changes. This style is what so-called transformational leadership, which is capable of changing the present situation into the desired one. The adoption of modern concepts like transformational leadership enables the organization to cope with the challenges facing it and overcome these challenges in order to achieve competence, effectiveness and excellence in performance.

Present organizations have begun to focus on re-activation and being transformed into ones capable of meeting future competitive challenges. This has been accompanied by growing concern on the part of researchers studying transformational leadership. Such type of leadership helps to quickly spot new market opportunities convenient for the development of proficiency within the organization. A transformational leader is described as being a person of vision, creativity and inspiration who leads the change.

The most important challenge, however, is creating effective leadership capable to lead the organization under this changeable turbulent environment into success, continuity and excellence. This can be achieved by improving performance through an effective type of

leadership - transformational leadership. A large number of studies have been conducted over the last two decades on transformational leadership (Bass, 1998). These studies showed that there was a relationship between the behaviors of transformational leadership and production on both the individual and organizational levels. This paved the way to a study which aimed at identifying the effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction regarding nurses in the Jordanian private hospitals.

In the present study we are interested in studying to what extent transformational leadership practiced at Jordanian private hospitals as perceived by registered nurses and to what extent they are job satisfied, and the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals. Thus, the purpose of this article is to draw the transformational leadership literature that is primarily concerned with the capabilities required to enact change successfully. First, we will describe the latest literature relating to transformational leadership. Next, we will review literature relating job satisfaction. Finally, we will integrate these literatures and links between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. In terms of the purposes, the following research question should be answered: What is the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals?

Despite the voluminous research that has been conducted in this area, a recent computer search failed to reveal any literature that examined the relevance of transformational leadership to a Jordan culture, especially at private hospitals. This paper reports an exploratory investigation on the relevance and nature of transformational leadership within a Jordanian management context. This paper reveals that the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction is not just theoretically sound, but, in fact, empirically proven. This report has applicability to any leader, or aspiring leader, in an organizational setting seeking to improve their abilities. The paper provides a useful review of the library and management literature relating transformational leadership style. This information is presented with the objective of increasing awareness, debate and additional research. The results of the studies provide greater insight into transformational leadership across nations and cultures

Conceptual background and hypotheses

Transformational leadership

As so far the administrative literature is concerned, the subject and studies of transformational leadership are relatively new. The first to be concerned with this issue was Burns in 1978. Burns stressed the importance of this contemporary type of leadership and later on people became more concerned with it as the world is currently witnessing rapid and tremendous changes.

Transformational leadership is different from transactional leadership in that it concentrated on development and progress, solidity, authorization, self-confidence and complement. It also concentrates on promoting development and strategic thinking. Transformational leaders carry on the change process more effectively than others. They clearly define things and care for others. They never discriminate on grounds of race, color, sex, religion, age, or social class (Chemjong, 2004). Furthermore, transformational leadership promotes the effect of transactional leadership on followers (Bass, 1985b, 1990a) by changing their personal values in order to support the organizational aims and vision. They achieve this by creating an atmosphere of confidence, which helps in vision-sharing.

Many studies have proved that high productivity, a decrease in the rate of job leaving, high levels of job satisfaction are all due to transformational leadership (Deluga, 1992; Marshall

et al., 1992; Masi and Cooke, 2000; Medley and Larochelle, 1995; Sparks and Schenk, 2001). Current studies have paid special attention to the development and training of transformational leadership. Many researchers have studied and defined transformational leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 1988; Tichy and Devanna, 1990, Bass and Avolio, 1990; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Roush, 1992). It was first defined by Burns (1978) as an attempt to motivate followers and encourage individuals, groups and organizations to change for the better.

Bass (1985) referred to the relationship between the transformational leader and his/her employees, which was represented by charisma (optimal effect), inspiring leadership, individual concern and intellectual stimulation. In contrast, (Kouzes and Posner, 1988) viewpoints depend on the employees' trust in their leader, which helps involving employees in attaining common vision. However, Tichy and Devanna (1990) remarked that transformational leadership is connected with change, creativity and pioneering, for transformational leadership is achieved through the recognition and the need for fresh determination and producing new vision towards organizational change. Yammarino (1994) defined transformational leadership as the one which motivates followers to do more than they are expected to do in a way that upgrades the individuals' level of awareness of the importance and value of outputs and how they are produced.

Bass and Avolio (1994) defined transformational leadership as the one which helps increasing employees' concern and deepening their level of perception as well as their acceptance of the groups' vision and aims. It also broadens their minds to see beyond than their own interests and think of their organization's interests. This can be achieved through the leader's charismatic effect and his meeting of the individuals' emotional needs and fostering their creativity. Yule (1998) described transformational leadership as the process of greatly affecting and changing the individuals' attitudes, behaviors and beliefs, and commitment of the individuals to the organizational tasks, aims and strategies. The following is a synopsis of the description of these transformational behaviors provided by Avolio et al. (1991).

Idealized influence attributed (charisma attributed)

This is an important factor in transformational leadership. It shows the employee's outlook at the leader in terms of power of his influence, self-confidence, his trust in others, his consistency and ideals which individuals make an effort to imitate. Thus, the leaders have become a target of admiration, respect, sense of responsibility, confidence, growing optimism and the talk of the followers (Avolio and Bass, 2002; Bass and Avolio, 1994). And accordingly, followers have shown a high level of confidence in their leader (Jung and Avolio, 2000).

Idealized influence behaviors (charisma behaviors)

This includes the leaders' values, beliefs, moral considerations, moral behavior and selfless acts. Establishing a common vision is an integral part of idealism. A transformational leader plays a role in helping others consider the future (Jung and Avolio, 2000). This happens when inspiration is produced through conformity of personal values with the group's interests (Avolio and Bass, 2002; Jung and Avolio, 2000). Transformational leadership implies being tolerant and risk-sharing with followers.

Inspirational motivation

A leader sets an example for his followers. He communicates vision, encourages hard work and expresses important goals simply (Bass, 1994). Transformational leaders motivate others through purposeful tasks that tend to be challenging (Avolio and Bass, 2002). Team spirit is excited by arousing enthusiasm and optimism (Bass, 1998).

Transformational leaders try to build relations with their followers via interactive contact which serves as a cultural link between them. This leads to a change in the values of both parties towards a common ground. The leader creates crystal clear vision of the future in his followers through realization of expectations and demonstrating commitment as to goals and common vision. This dimension is measured by the leaders' ability, confidence in his values and vision to bring about.

Individualized considerations

The leader provides constant reactions and combines individuals' needs with the organizational function. He shows personal interest in followers' requirements of growth and achievement (Avolio and Bass, 2002). To do this, a leader acts as a referee and supervisor. He helps develop his follower's abilities towards high levels of potentialities. A leader must consider individual differences between his followers in terms of their requirements and desires. He plays a double role through effective contact with them (Avolio and Bass, 2002; Bass, 1998). A leader can develop his followers' abilities by delegating tasks and secretly watching them being implemented so that he can ensure the amount of support and supervision needed. In addition, the positive effect of individualized consideration and transformational behaviors lies in empowering followers (Behling and McFillen, 1996). And this can be measured by the leader's interest in the followers' needs for development and growth, and his being careful to train and guide them (Bass, 1994).

Intellectual stimulation (creative)

Transformational leadership stimulates individuals to be able to be creative and excellent by introducing ideas and early solutions to problems (Avolio and Bass, 2002, p.2). However, it highlights rationality and new approaches for followers to follow. It also re-evaluates old beliefs and values and looks at difficulties as problems that need to be solved and seeks logical solutions to these problems. Transformational leadership does not criticize followers in public for their mistakes. Rather, it provides them with challenging tasks and encourages them to solve problems the way the like.

Job satisfaction

Organizations are social systems which consider human resources as one of the major factors for achieving competence and effectiveness. They require that both managers and employees work hard to achieve their goals. Organization can never achieve success without the commitment and hard work on the part of employees. Job satisfaction is a means to attract and retain qualified employees. It reflects people's attitudes to their jobs and to the organizations they work for. Job satisfaction can be typically defined as the emotional reaction of an employee towards work, on the basis of comparing the actual results and the expected ones.

Job satisfaction is also defined as the person's assessment of his own work and the context and content of the work (McShane, 2004; Mosadeghrad, 2003b). Job satisfaction can be compared to a multidimensional structure including the employee's feelings towards a diverse group of intrinsic and extrinsic components. It includes certain aspects of satisfaction relating to pay, promotion, working conditions, supervision, organizational practices, and relationships with work colleagues (Misener, et al., 1996).

There are several factors affecting job satisfaction including salaries, fringe benefits, achievement, self-independence, recognition, communication, working conditions, the importance of work, colleagues, organizational climate, mutual personal contacts, working for a well-reputed agency, supervision and working within a team. There are other factors

responsible for the falling of job satisfaction related to working with non-skilled and non-trained employees, grinding work related to documentation and routine tasks, tensions, role ambiguity and job conflict (Navaie-Waliser et al., 2004; Koustelios et al., 2003; De Loach, 2003; Ilies and Judg, 2003; Gigantesco et al., 2003; Chu et al., 2003; McNeese-Smith, 1999; Thyer, 2003).

Among the factors that determine job satisfaction is leadership, which is considered an important indicator and plays a central role in affecting job satisfaction. Leadership is an administrative job primarily directed towards people and social interaction. It is also the process of influencing people to achieve the organizational goals (Skansi, 2000). Many of the studies conducted in different countries showed a positive mutual relationship between leadership and job satisfaction (Seo et al., 2004; Vance and Larson, 2002; Chiok Foong Loke, 2001; Dunham-Taylor, 2000; Stordeur et al., 2000; Berson and Linton, 2005; Mosadeghrad, 2003a).

Research on transformational leadership and job satisfaction

Transformational leadership styles function better than the other types (transactional and laissez-faire) in terms of employees staying in their job as well as job satisfaction (Dahlen, 2002; Bregggen and Severinsson, 2003; Fletcher, 2001; Bass and Avolio, 1990; Northouse, 2001; Dvir et al., 2002; Waldman et al., 2001), transformational leadership patterns reduce work pressures and raise employees' morale resulting in promoting their job satisfaction. Medley and La Rochelle (1995) suggested that the type of leadership plays an important role in job satisfaction particularly the transformational type which affected job satisfaction the most. While transactional leadership results in expected outcomes, transformational leadership results in performance that goes well beyond what is expected, Lowe et al. (1996) found that individuals who exhibited transformational leadership were perceived to be more effective leaders with better work outcomes than were individuals who exhibited only transactional leadership. These findings were true for higher and lower level leaders as well as for leaders in public and private settings. Transformational leadership moves followers to accomplish more than expected. They become motivated to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group or organization (Bass and Avolio, 1990; Northouse, 2001; Shamir, 1995). Some researchers (Sergiovanni and Corbally, 1984; Smith and Peterson, 1988) believe that there are certain traits that a leader should have to produce job satisfaction among employees, such as solidity and clarity of vision. So followers have to share their organization's vision in an attempt to realize effective transformational leadership and their chief concern should be the realization of organizational goals rather than their own personal interests (Hater and Bass, 1988; Archbold, 2004). Studies conducted by (Dum Dum, et al., 2002; Fuller, et al., 1996; Love, et al.) showed that an employee's performance is a corollary of working under leaderships possessing transformational properties. In addition, having a good relationship with employees plays an important role in achieving positive results on the part of the employees.

The subordinates' satisfaction with their supervision in organizations has been found to be related to the leadership behavior used by managers (Shim et al., 2002; Yousef, 2000; Loke, 2001; Ugboro and Obeng, 2000; Masi, 2000; Luthans, F., and Avolio, 2003; Dvir et al., 2002; Dum Dum et al., 2002; Walumbwa et al., 2004). It also reduces their work stress and raises their morale. Other studies explained that transformational leadership is more connected to job satisfaction than transactional leadership (Ribelin, 2003; Wilmore and Thomas, 2001; Bass and Avolio, 1990; Dvir et al., 2002). Pakman (2001;) found that transformational leadership is positively related to the employees' job satisfaction while transactional and laissez-faire leadership is negatively related to job satisfaction. Some studies (Avolio and Bass, 1988; Bass et al., 1987; Bass et al., 1987; Conger and Kanungo, 1988; House et al., 1991; Roberts, 1985) have revealed that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Lowe et al. (1996)

performed 33 independent empirical studies using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to study the relationships between leadership styles and leadership effectiveness. They concluded that there was a strong positive correlation between all the components of transformational leadership and subordinate satisfaction with supervision.

It was expected to find that registered nurses satisfaction with supervision is positively related to transformational leadership practiced by Jordanian private hospitals.

H1. There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals.

Research methodology

This section presents the research methodology used in this study. We describe the sample used, discuss how each of the variables included in the study is operationalized and finally present the statistical analysis.

Population and sample

The participants in this study consisted of registered nurses from private hospitals located in Amman (capital of Jordan). Survey data had been collected in February 2010. The surveys have not been coded and all participants have been kept anonymous. There have been 200 surveys mailed out to registered nurses. One hundred and sixty eight usable surveys were returned with a response rate of 83%, The following provides the details of this analysis

Of the total usable responses (168), there were 123 (73.2%) respondents who identified themselves as female, while 45 (26.8%) respondents identified themselves as male. Of the 168 responses, 165 provided information on the number of years completed within their current organization. Seventy-eight respondents responded that they have completed (Less than 5 year) years of service at their current Hospital, 52 responded between (5- Less than 10 years), 18 responded between (15- Less than 15 years), 17 responded 15+ years completed at their current Hospital.

Instrumentation

The survey had three parts. Part one of the survey has been developed to obtain demographic information including gender, the rank level within the organization, age, number of years of service completed within the current organization.

Part two of the survey has been developed to measure the degree of transformational leadership classified by five factors: idealized influence attributed (charisma attributed), idealized influence behaviors (charisma behaviors), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Part two of the survey was adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Avolio and Bass, 1995). There were 20 questions that measured the five factors of transformational leadership using a five-point Likert scale as a means for the participants to record the responses. The possible responses included: 0 = Not at all, 1 = Once in a while, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = fairly often and 4 = frequently.

Part three of the survey has been developed to measure the degree of job satisfaction measuring two factors of job satisfaction including internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) job satisfaction. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss (1967) measured two factors of job satisfaction. There were 18 questions that measured the two factors of job satisfaction using a five-point Likert scale as a means for the participants to record their response. The possible responses included: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neither, 4 = satisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

Data analysis

All of the data have been entered into and analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for Windows, version 13.0. Prior to statistical analyses, data cleaning and handling of missing values were performed. Frequency distributions of all the variables were checked for outliers, missing data, and typing errors. Normal distributions of the dependent and independent variables were assessed.

Summary statistics, including the computation of means, standard deviations, frequency counts, and percentages of all demographic data, were performed. The Chronbach's alpha coefficients for internal consistency reliability of the MLQ-5X and the MSQ short form were evaluated. Mean scores and standard deviations were computed for the levels of five factors of transformational leadership and two factors of job satisfaction in order to answer research questions one, two, and three.

Pearson r correlation has been used to answer research question three in this study. Pearson r correlation has been used to examine significant relationships between the continuous variables of the five subscales of the transformational leadership MLQ-5X instrument and registered nurses job satisfaction levels. The data have been evaluated to identify if statistical assumptions are met. For example, the assumption of multicollinearity has been examined to identify if the interrelatedness of the independent variables exists (Munro, 2001). Dummy coding of the demographic variables was performed when necessary. An alpha level of confidence was at .05 for statistic tests.

All data had been entered into SPSS 13.0 for Windows software for analyses. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency for all demographic variables, and internal consistency reliability coefficients and means and standard deviations for the two study instruments were computed where appropriate. Alpha was set at .05 level of confidence.

Descriptive statistics

Table (1) outlines the mean scores and standard deviations of each of the five dimensions of transformational leadership and the total scale of the transformational MLQ-5X instrument. The mean of the total scale was 83.25 (SD=19.2) and the item mean scores of the five dimensions ranged from 2.11 (SD=.88) to 2.80 (SD=.85). The results indicated that registered nurses perceived higher item mean scores in the transformational leadership style of inspirational motivation (M=2.80, SD=.85) and idealized behavioral influence (M=2.73, SD=.78) of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals .

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF THE TOTAL SUBSCALE SCORES OF THE MLQ-5X (N=168)

Scale and subscale	Min.	Max.	M	SD	One sample t test t
Total scale	13.7	142.5	83.25	19.2	
Transformational	0.000	4.00	2.73	0.78	-9.56**
Idealized influence:					
Behavior					
Attributed	0.00	4.00	2.45	0.86	-11.32**
Inspirational motivation	0.00	4.00	2.80	0.85	-7.71**
Intellectual stimulation	0.00	4.00	2.45	0.78	-11.63**
Individualize consideration	0.00	4.00	2.11	0.88	-18.05**

Note: A 5-point Likert scale ranged from 0 = not at all, to 4 = frequently. ** $p < .01$

The results of registered nurses job satisfaction levels are presented in Table (2). The mean scores of the MSQ short form were 69.4 (SD=10) for general satisfaction scale, 43.3 (SD= 6.35) for intrinsic satisfaction subscale, and 18.6 (SD 3.62) for extrinsic satisfaction subscale. According to the manual of Weiss, et al. (1967), percentile scores of 25 or lower indicate low satisfaction, percentile scores between 26 and 74 display moderate satisfaction, and percentile scores of 75 or higher represent high satisfaction in the subject's job. Based on this definition, the registered nurses job satisfaction in this study represented a moderate satisfaction level, and internal satisfaction received the highest score of (43.3).

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF THE TOTAL AND SUBSCALE SCORES OF THE MSQ SHORT FORM (N=286)

Scale and subscale	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Norm ^a		One sample t-test	
					M	SD	t	p
General satisfaction	31	92	69.4	10	73.75	11.8	-9.25	.00
Intrinsic satisfaction	21	56	43.3	6.35	47.2	7.37	-9.43	.00
Extrinsic satisfaction	6	28	18.6	3.62	19.7	4.72	-4.71	.00

Note. A 5-point Likert scale ranged from 1= very dissatisfied to 5= very satisfied.

^a Norm data were obtained from 1,723 individuals in a variety of occupational areas reported in the manual of Weiss, et al. (1967).

In order to understand the differences in job satisfaction levels between this study and the norm data of Weiss, et al. (1967), a series of one sample t-tests were computed. The results indicated that the mean scores of general, intrinsic, and extrinsic satisfaction subscales were significantly lower than those of the norm data.

Tests of hypotheses and discussion

H1. There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction of registered nurses at Jordanian private hospitals.

The Pearson *r* correlation was computed to examine significant relationships between the continuous variables of the five subscales of the transformational leadership MLQ-5X instrument and registered nurses job satisfaction levels (see Table 3). The correlation coefficients were significant for all of the five subscales and registered nurses job satisfaction levels. The Spearman rho correlation of nonparametric tests was also used to support these findings (see Table 3).

TABLE 3. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE JOB SATISFACTION AND THE FIVE SUBSCALES OF THE MLQ-5X

Variable	Job satisfaction	
	Pearson <i>r</i> correlation	Spearman rho correlation
Idealized influence: Behavior	0.392**	0.380**
Idealized influence: Attributed	0.439**	0.421**
Inspirational motivation	0.313**	0.289**
Intellectual stimulation	0.376**	0.325**
Individualized consideration	0.432**	0.410**

Note: P<.01 level (2-tailed)

This finding is consistent with two Western studies (Barrett and Goldenberg, 1988; Snarr and Krochak, 1996), which proposed that registered nurses tend to be satisfied with their jobs.

TABLE 4. PEARSON CORRELATION RELATIONSHIPS AMONG TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP FACTORS AND JOB SATISFACTION

	Idealized Influence (attributed)	Idealized influence (behavior)	Inspirational motivation	Intellectual stimulations	Individual considerations
Intrinsic job satisfaction	0.421**	0.29**	0.42**	0.48**	0.39**
Extrinsic job satisfaction	0.212**	0.231**	0.22**	0.35**	0.28**

Note: ** Pearson correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows a statistically significant positive relationship existed between the five dimensions of transformational leadership and the two dimensions of job satisfaction, the strongest relationship between internal job satisfaction and transformational leadership was visible among the intellectual stimulation dimension. Also, the strongest relationship between external job satisfaction and transformational leadership was visible among the intellectual stimulation dimension. All dimensions of transformational leadership were more positively correlated with intrinsic rather than extrinsic job satisfaction; mean that transformational leadership dimensions create a good environment that increase job satisfaction within Jordanian private hospital, this result is consistent with (Chen, 2005; Liu, 1997; Liu, 1984; Avolio and Bass, 1988; Bass et al., 1987; Bass et al., 1987; Conger and Kanungo 1988; House et al., 1991; Roberts, 1985 ; Pakman 2001), they have revealed that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

Recommendations

Based on the results concluded within the present study, leaders should focus on being inspirationally motivating by looking toward the future with optimism, articulating a vision of future, displaying confident behavior as well as providing autonomy for one's work. These characteristics were found to be related to job satisfaction. In addition, inspirational motivation was found to be a predictor of job satisfaction. In an effort to raise the levels of job satisfaction, leaders should utilize the aspects of inspirational motivation. Leaders should also focus on being intellectually stimulating, seeking different perspectives when solving problems, instilling pride in employees and considering the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.

Recommendations for future research

Future research could involve transactional leadership in addition to transformational leadership to examine which leadership style is perceived in private hospitals in Jordan.

Future research could compare between Jordanian private and public hospital to see if the type of organization impacts the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

This study examined the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Future research could involve more variables such as organizational commitment.

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